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The President's Daily Brief

5 April 1973

45

~~*Top Secret*~~

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

TOP SECRET

April 5, 1973

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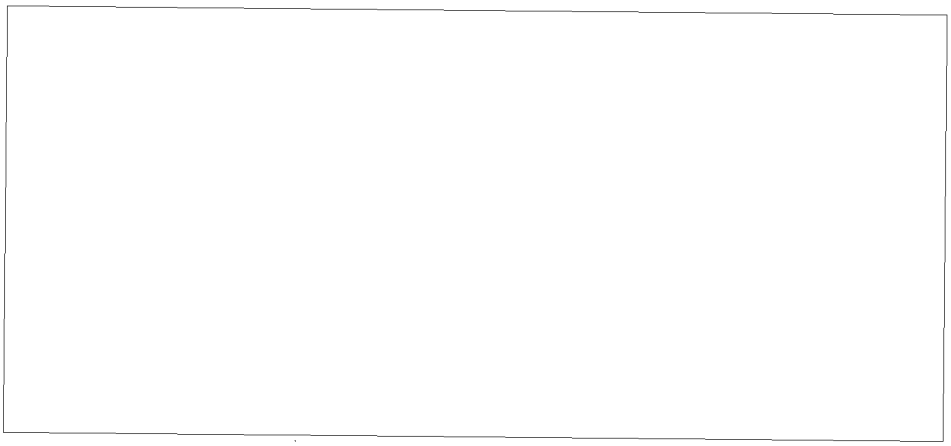
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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

5 April 1973

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Khmer insurgents may now be ready to apply direct military pressure against Phnom Penh. *(Page 1)*

The Chinese [redacted] 25X1

(Page 2)

[redacted] Chinese [redacted] 25X11

[redacted] Japanese [redacted] 25X1

the [redacted] *(Page 3)* 25X1

The Egyptian Government is contriving tensions with civil defense exercises and blood donor drives. *(Page 4)*

Terrorists are trying to prevent an orderly transfer of power in Argentina. *(Page 5)*

Ethiopian and Somali troops are squared off at each other, and there could be accidental clashes along the border. *(Page 6)*

Soviet tankers are now carrying Venezuelan oil to Europe. *(Page 7)*

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CAMBODIA

The Khmer insurgents have closed sections of the Mekong River and all main roads leading into Phnom Penh. A number of recently intercepted messages indicate the insurgents are planning to attack near the capital within the next week. Other messages suggest they are planning for hit-and-run attacks within the city itself.

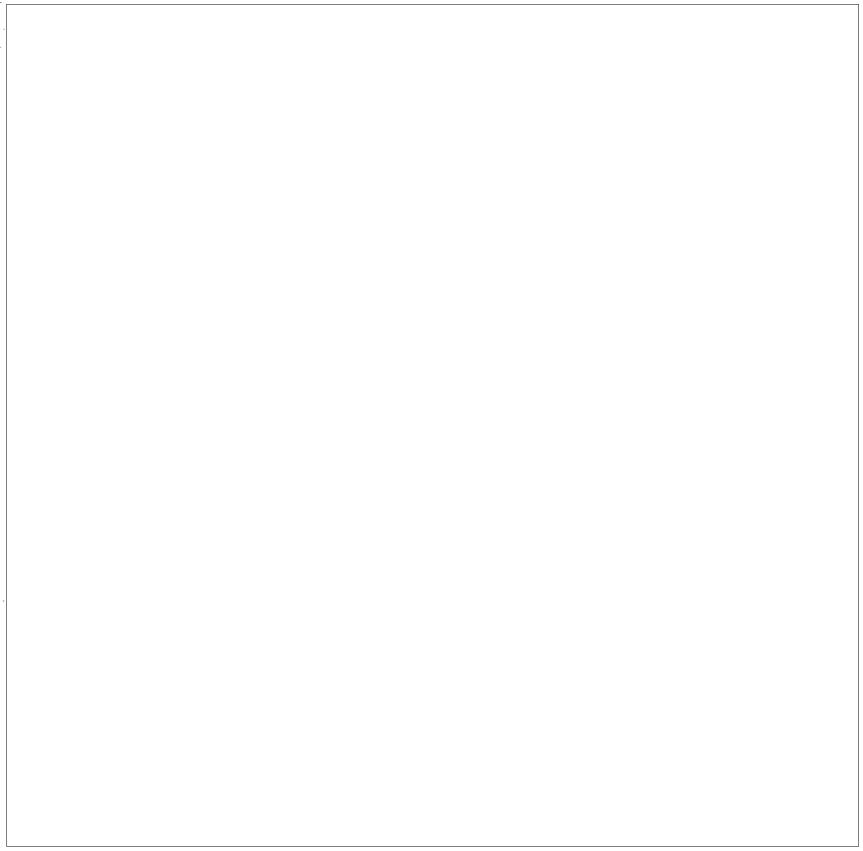
With air support the numerically superior government forces in Phnom Penh should be able to withstand sizable attacks close to the capital. Sapper raids within the city would be more difficult to defend against and would have a more serious impact on the shaky political and military situation.

The situation is compounded by the army's decreasing effectiveness, due in part to the failure to resolve long-standing problems of poor leadership and organization. Other factors include a general war-weariness that has been heightened by dashed hopes that the Vietnam cease-fire would be extended to Cambodia, and the army's loss of respect for the increasingly ineffective Lon Nol.

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CHINA-TAIWAN

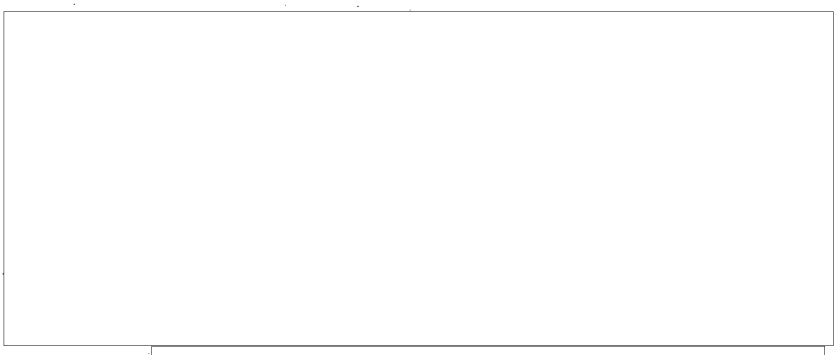


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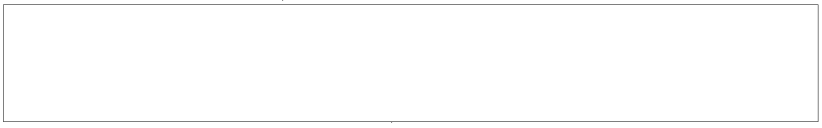
CHINA-USSR-JAPAN



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EGYPT

The government is making new gestures to lend credence to Sadat's recent warlike statements. Civil defense exercises and a blood donation drive have been widely publicized and accompanied by more tough language in the local media. Sadat has also increased punishments for civil disobedience to help tighten up on the home front.

Sadat's credibility remains low and most Egyptians apparently are skeptical that the government is engaged in anything beyond creating the usual contrived tensions. Despite this general skepticism, there has been some speculation in Cairo that the regime is planning a military move against Israel soon.

Sadat certainly is aware of the dangers involved in a move against the Israelis, a realization that is probably shared by most Egyptian military leaders. There are still no signs of military movements that would have to precede a resumption of hostilities on a large scale. We would not necessarily have any early warning of more limited military operations, however.

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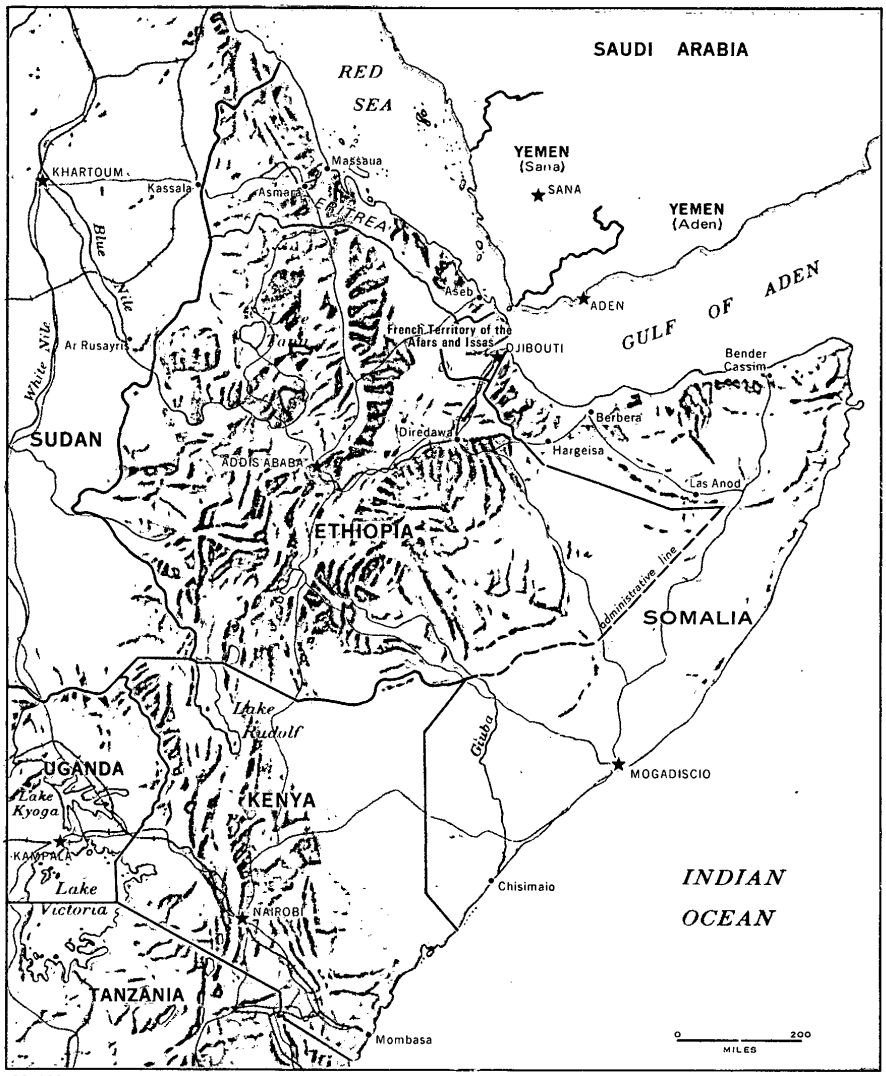
ARGENTINA

The assassination yesterday of a ranking army intelligence officer is a major escalation in the wave of terrorist actions that have developed since the election last month. Military leaders are seriously disturbed about these incidents, which have included a series of bombings and the kidnaping of a retired admiral and a US businessman. Nevertheless, the high command has announced that it will not be deterred from transferring power to the Peronists.

The terrorism appears to be the work of a Trotskyist-oriented group calling itself the People's Revolutionary Army. The group seeks revolution, rather than an orderly transfer of power from one "bourgeois" institution to another.

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ETHIOPIA-SOMALIA

Reinforced Ethiopian and Somali troops are squared off against each other across the frontier. Both sides claim that their military moves are defensive and neither appears anxious for a fight, but accidental clashes could occur at any time.

Ethiopia is militarily superior, but it fears the Somalis because they have Soviet support and have been receiving sizable quantities of Soviet weapons. The Ethiopians also are worried that a border war might complicate the process of succession to their aged emperor. 25X1

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Moreover, prolonged clashes along the border might lead dissidents in Somali-inhabited parts of Ethiopia or in Eritrea to increase their guerrilla wars against the government.

The Somalis claim large parts of Ethiopia, and presumably their military moves have been in support of their demands. Ethiopia has refused to negotiate such claims and has been coldly turned down by the Somalis when it offered to improve relations in other fields. The Ethiopians are likely to use the current tension to press the US for additional military aid.

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NOTE

Venezuela: The state petroleum company is leasing Soviet tankers supplying oil to Cuba to carry petroleum from Venezuela to Western Europe, an arrangement Moscow has been trying unsuccessfully to make since 1968. This will allow Soviet tankers, which up to now returned empty from Cuba, to earn foreign exchange by hauling Western petroleum.

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